

ASC CARNIVORE MOLECULAR SCATOLOGY STUDY PROTOCOL

Materials:

Small paper bags
Long toothpicks or wooden coffee stirrers
Disposable gloves
Plastic tape measure (metric)
Hanging folder tab labels
GPS
Trash bag (Leave no trace!)
Paper clips

Methods:

Upon encountering a scat sample,

1. Fill in data sheet first

- a. **Scat ID**
- b. **Date** in mm/dd/yyyy format
- c. **Collector** last name or initials
- d. **Longitude and Latitude** from GPS (lat/long or UTM, if UTM specify UTM zone)
- e. **Elevation**, preferably in meters
- f. Describe the **Immediate location**, within 10-meter radius (e.g., trail width, off-trail, vegetation, etc)
- g. Describe the **General habitat** (e.g., boreal forest, shrubland, grassland, riparian, etc.)
- h. Measure **Scat length and Scat diameter** in centimeters with tape measure; measure longest and widest scat dimensions possible, rounding to nearest millimeter
- i. Describe **Scat condition** (e.g., fresh, dry, moldy, etc.)
- j. Look out for other **evidence of carnivore presence** (e.g., tracks, sightings, carcass; note if you hear coyote or wolf howls that night)

2. Collect scat sample

- a. Using disposable gloves, insert as much of the scat in the paper bag as you feel comfortable carrying on your expedition. If not practical to collect whole scats, use wooden toothpick or stirrer to probe scat and collect from various locations (from the interior and exterior of the scat), but avoiding moldy areas. Discard gloves and toothpick/stirrer (only one toothpick/stirrer per sample!) using Leave No Trace principles.
- b. Write the Scat ID and date on a hanging folder tab label and insert in the paper bag with the scat. Fold the paper bag shut with a paper clip. Write the scat ID and date on the outside of the paper bag.
- c. Store samples in freezer as soon as possible, but avoid freeze-thaw cycles. If samples will remain in the field for long, keep them dry and away from your tent at night.